



YMCA of Ashland Ohio
Children's Kwanmukan Karate Class
Information 2023

Q. Which class does my child belong in?

A. If your child is very young, preschool through Kindergarten, he or she belongs in the Karate Moves Class. This is a half hour class that covers some basic moves. Parents are encouraged to join in with their child. This can be especially helpful for the very shy child. Some children are reluctant to join in at first and prefer to watch and that is alright as they will still learn by watching until they feel more comfortable. Some discomfort is normal as karate is a very new skill to most children and it initially feels much different than what they were expecting.

If your child is in first grade through age 11 they can start in the Low Rank Class. Children who are 12 years old may either begin in the Low Rank Class to learn the basics or go directly to the Adult class depending on where they would feel most comfortable. If you have questions regarding this, please feel free to ask the children's instructor to assist you in assessing the situation.

Q. What will my child learn when they begin either the Karate Moves or the Low Rank class?

A. Like all new learning experiences, there is basic information that is essential for participation in the High Rank and eventually the Adult Class. The fundamental movements that form the foundation for all that will be learned in the future include seven arm blocks, four kicks, and three stances. Students will learn to be able to demonstrate respect for other class members, show the ability to stand quietly while in class and to show respect by using good manners. This, of course, takes time and practice. In addition to karate skills, self defense skills will be introduced. Stripes on their white belt will track their progress prior to getting their first Kyu Rank which would be an Orange Belt. This process takes place in both the Low Rank Class and the Karate Moves Class.



Q. What should my child wear to their first session in either Karate Moves or the Low Rank class?

A. Clothing that fits loosely and is not too warm should be worn. Avoid blue jeans as they make some moves, especially the kicks, very difficult. Karate is practiced with bare feet to improve balance and reduce the possibility of injury to self and others. Jewelry and watches should not be worn. Gum, candy and pop are not allowed in class. A container of water is encouraged.

Q. When can my child wear a uniform and where can I get one?

A. A Karate uniforms or Gi (pronounced Gee) is not needed until after you have determined that Karate is a good fit for your child and they have earned 18 karate points. Uniforms may be purchased from the class instructor. (not the YMCA) It is wise to wait until you feel certain that your child wants to continue training. At that point, your child will then contract with you to work off the cost of the uniform so that they understand that a uniform is a privilege that is earned. A form for this is available from the class instructor.

Q. Now that we have a uniform, how do you tie the belt?

A. The belt is tied so that there is a triple layer of belt within the knot. This keeps the belt neatly in place. If your child is young and you feel the need to learn how to tie their belt, you can follow the directions on page 6. Or you can have them ask us and we will be glad to show them so they can learn to tie it themselves. We will be glad to show them as many times as they need to have it shown to them.

Q. Now that my child has a uniform or GI, what else does my child need?

A. After your child has earned their stripes on their white belt, your child may begin to learn how to spar. They again will contract with you for the cost of their sparring foot and hand pads which are also available from the class instructor. They will need foot and hand pads to protect themselves and others. Boys will need an athletic cup and both boys and girls will need a mouth guard. A mouth guard and or athletic cup are available from a sporting goods store. If your child has braces, you should ask their Orthodontist what type of mouth guard they want your child to have. They usually have them available in their office.

Q. Now that I am aware of sparring equipment, what is sparring?

A. Sparring or Kumite (pronounced, Ku ma tay) is practice fighting. The purpose of sparring is to teach the students to combine the techniques that they are learning. Our school is a light contact school. This means that while there is some contact to help with learning proper distancing, there is to be no significant force used with the contact. The face is to be avoided. Contact gradually increases as a student trains and works together with other students on combining both old and new moves. Sparring encourages independent thinking as no one is telling you what to do next. Each person has to choose their next action based on what they anticipate is going to happen. Sparring also teaches self-control as sparring partners must learn to protect not only themselves but also the other students in class. Most students, even those that are feeling unsure, eventually find sparring to be fun. Parents should encourage their child to keep working at their skills and eventually they will find that it is fun.

Q. When will my child be considered High Rank?

A. Children are considered to be High Rank when they have learned the basic moves, the first eight One Steps and have received permission from the instructor. The amount of time that this takes varies greatly in children due to differences in rate of development, age and comprehension of the meaning of basic moves. High Rank students attend both the regular low rank class and an additional extended class immediately after the low rank students are dismissed. The length of that class will be approximately 15 to



30 minutes and covers learning One Steps 9 through 32 and higher level katas..

Q. What is Kata?

A. Kata consists of a series of preset moves designed to teach combinations of karate techniques. Kata in some ways resembles a dance. While there is no music, there is rhythm, pattern and balance. Many Katas are graceful in nature. A number of Katas are very old and were developed by talented oriental martial artists during the last century or more.

Q. What is a One Step?

A. One Steps are also preset movement combinations consisting of two to three hand/or foot techniques. They are also designed to teach movement combinations. One Steps are what a person would use to defend themselves in a dangerous situation and may well be the most important part of Karate training. In our system, there are 32 One Steps. While this may sound like a lot, they are grouped in such a manner that they are not difficult to remember once they are learned.

Q. Why are there different colored belts?

A. Centuries ago there were no different colors of belts. Everyone started out with a white belt and then wore it until it became so dirty it was black. Now we use colors to designate rank. This is not only more sanitary, it is more fun. Everyone starts with a white belt. There are eight colored stripes to be earned on the white belt representing the Kyu (pronounced Cue) ranks that are to come. The first Kyu belt is orange which is followed by gold, blue, green, purple, red, and brown. Other karate schools may place their colors in a different order. There are two Kyu levels or grades in each of the belt colors and 10 Dan (pronounced, Don) levels of Black in our Kwanmukan Karate system. In all grades below Black, a white stripe is used to indicate the second level.

Q. When will my child receive his first belt (Kyu rank) and how is rank awarded?

A: In our YMCA Children's Kwanmukan Classes, certification happens approximately every nine months depending on the number of students and



their needs. Certification should not be considered a test and your child should not worry about “failing” as this will not happen because it is the class instructor’s responsibility to assess the child’s skills prior to certification. The first requirement that your child will meet is to have enough points accumulated to be allowed to certify. These points are given at the beginning of class each week. Extra points may be earned by knowing and answering the question of the week listed on the calendar. There is also bonus questions each session. Also, your child needs to know the Kata and One Steps required for their next rank. In addition, your child must also contract with you for the cost of Certification just as they did for receiving their uniform. The cost of Certification is \$25.00. Parents are encouraged to attend certification. They may use video or pictures to record memories. They should show their child that they appreciate the effort that they have put into their training.

Rank is awarded in our system by the Kwanmukan Karate system which is located in Akron, Ohio. The founder of our system is Hanshi (pronounced “han she”) George Anderson, our Grandmaster. Unfortunately, Mr. Anderson died in August of 2009. Our Kwanmukan system has a number of other schools in the Ohio area. Mr. Anderson, with much care, systematically developed our Kwanmukan Karate system of training by studying with martial artists through out the world. He was also called upon to teach in a number of countries and is well known with in the martial arts community. In 1986 he was named Black Belt of the Year by Black Belt Magazine. He was a tenth degree Black Belt in Karate. Our Great Grandmaster was Chull Hee Park, Director, Kang Duk Won Association of Seoul, Korea, is also deceased. Hanshi Anderson was a student of Great Grandmaster Park for many years. Together they have created a martial arts system that reflects the wisdom of masters from numerous countries spanning hundreds of years. Your child can be very proud to hold rank in the Kwanmukan Karate system as it is recognized internationally.



A message from Shihani Sherry Howe:

Thank you for entrusting part of your child's development to me. I believe that your child will learn more than karate while participating in my class. They will also learn the basic skills of respect, cooperation and leadership while exploring their physical coordination abilities.

It is my goal to work with each child within their personal limitations. Each child is unique and will learn at a different rate and in a different manner from other children. I encourage parents to observe what is being taught and I am always open to their opinions as to how I may improve how the class is being conducted.

As a Professional Clinical Counselor licensed by the State of Ohio, I bring to the class training in child development. If your child has been diagnosed with ADD/ADHD, Asperger's Disorder, Autistic Disorder, and/or any other developmental issue. I welcome the opportunity to work with them. Please let me know your concerns about them.

As you observe your child in class, please keep in mind that their performance does not determine their value as a person. You may have the pleasant experience of seeing them excel. Other times they may be having an off day or perhaps physical coordination may not be their primary gift. I strive to maintain an atmosphere that encourages your child to explore their abilities with out the fear of making a mistake. In fact, mistakes are encouraged as learning any new skill requires a process of doing it wrong and then correcting with the next try.

Learning to accept criticism may well be the most important skill that your child may taken with them from class. It is my goal to correct with sensitivity to each child's physical and emotional abilities. I am also aware that there is a limit as to how much can be improved in each individual in any one class. Therefore, I may ignore some things in order to emphasize something else, such as their willingness to participate in class with energy and enthusiasm. Everyone needs to feel successful first in order to be encouraged to make a change in what they are doing.

Once again thank you for letting me be a part of your child's development.

Respectfully,

Shihan, Sherry Howe

howe.sherry@gmail.com



MINIMUM RANK REQUIREMENTS*

White Belt Stripes	See page 8 for requirements (12 points)
12 th Kyu (orange)	Basics (all stripes on white belt) and 4 One Steps (50 points)
11 th Kyu (orange stripe)	Heian Shodan and 4 One Steps (50 points)
10 th Kyu (gold)	Heian Shodan and 6 One Steps (55 points)
9 th Kyu (gold stripe)	Heian Nidan; 8 One Steps & previous kata (55 points)
8 th Kyu (blue)	Heian Nidan; 12 One Steps & previous kata (60 points)
7 th Kyu (blue stripe)	Heian Sandan; 16 One Steps & all previous katas (60 points)
6 th Kyu (green)	Heian Sandan; 20 One Steps & all previous katas (65 points)
5 th Kyu (green stripe)	Heian Yodan; 24 One Steps & all previous katas (65 points)
4b Kyu (purple)	Heian Yodan; 28 One Steps & all previous katas (65)
4a Kyu (purple stripe)	Heian Godan; 32 One steps & all previous katas **
3b Kyu (red)	Heian Godan; 32 One Steps & all previous katas **
3a Kyu (red stripe)	Kwan Kong Chang Kwan 1 & all above requirements **
2b Kyu (brown)	Kwan Kong Chang Kwan 1,2 & all above requirements **
2a Kyu (brown stripe)	Kwan Kong Chang Kwan 1,2,3 & all above requirements **
1b Kyu (brown 2 stripe)	Kwan Kong Chang Kwan 1,2,3, 4 & all above requirements **
1a Kyu (brown 3 stripe)	Kwan Kong Chang Kwan 1,2,3,4 & all above requirements **
Shodan (black)	Kwan Kong Chang Kwan 1,2,3,4 & all above requirements **

Please note: Kwan Kong Chang Kwan 1,2,3 & 4 are performed together as one Kata. During certification, students are expected to be prepared to perform any past Katas, One Steps, techniques and training drills as requested. Students must also show appropriate proficiency for their rank in sparring.

*All requirements are subject to change by Hanshi Larry Overholt.

**These ranks are to be earned in the Adult Class.

How to tie a belt

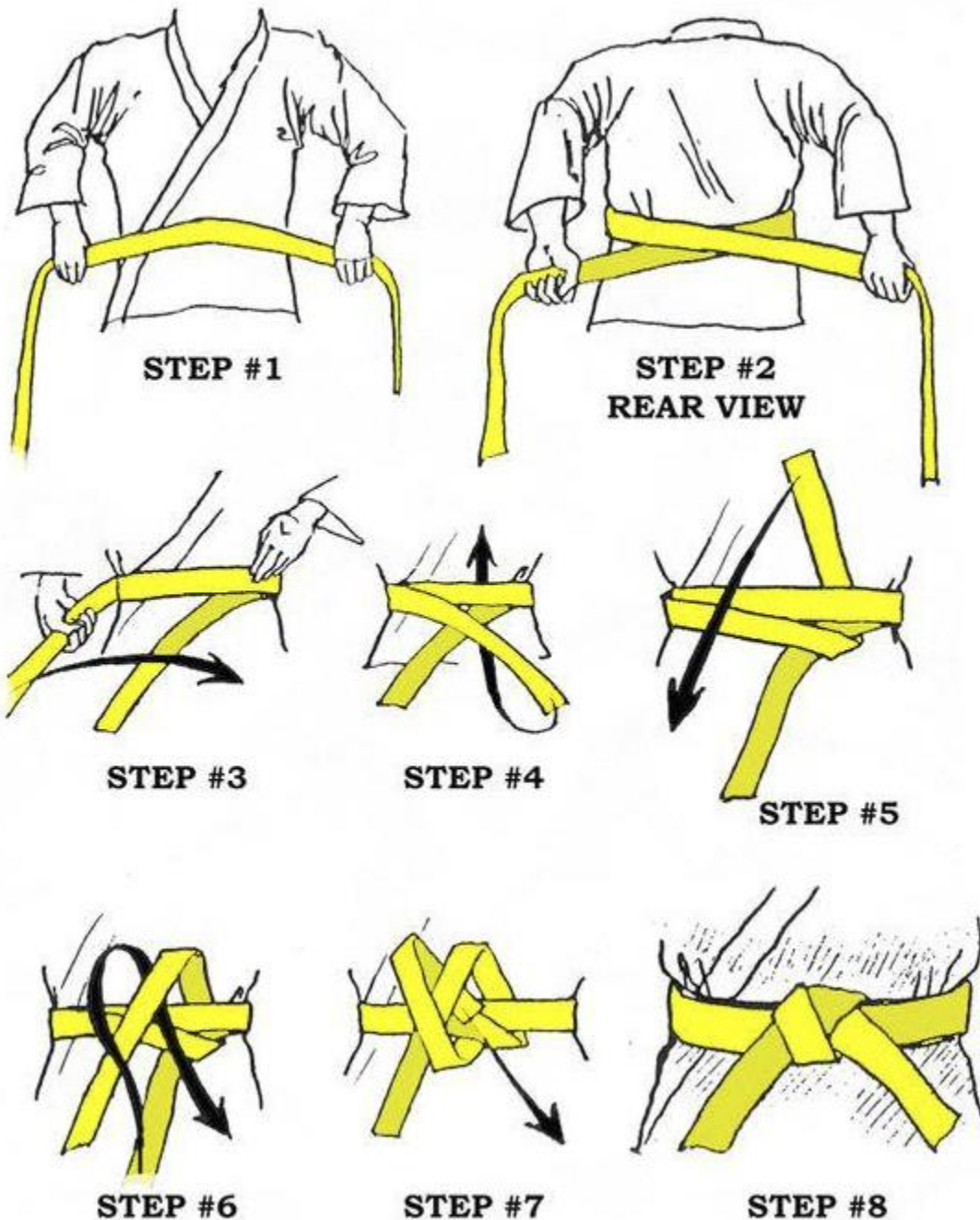
Directions:

Find the middle of the belt.

Place the middle of the belt in the center of the waist area and take the right half of the belt around the back of the body to the front and place that half of the belt under the middle.

Then take the remaining half of the belt around the body the other direction so that it is on top of the center and first half. Now the middle of the belt is sandwiched between both halves.

Take the top half of the belt and tuck it under everything so that it comes up and out from behind. To finish, tie the ends together once.





WHITE BELT LEVELS:

ORANGE STRIPE:

___ X BLOCK ___ LOW DEFEND ___ HIGH DEFEND

GOLD STRIPE:

___ FRONT STANCE ___ BACK STANCE ___ KIBA DACH STANCE

BLUE STRIPE:

___ STANDING STILL ___ PAYING ATTENTION ___ LISTENING

GREEN STRIPE:

___ INWARD DEFEND ___ TEMPLE STRIKE ___ OUTWARD DEFEND

PURPLE STRIPE:

___ OPPOSITE EAR ___ DOUBLE KNIFE ___ PUNCHING

RED STRIPE:

___ FRONT SNAP KICK ___ SIDE KICK ___ ROUNDHOUSE KICK

___ SPINNING BACK KICK

BROWN STRIPE:

___ RESPECT ___ HONESTY ___ SELF CONTROL

BLACK STRIPE:

___ BASIC KARATE TERMS

THE ABOVE SKILLS FORM THE FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING TO ORANGE BELT